Sermon Ibrahim AS Living consciously, conscientiously and constructively

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

For Halifax updated
Sermon August 14, 2026

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ للهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللهُ فَلاَ مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلاَ هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلاَ تَمُوتُنَّ إِلاَّ وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ} (آل عمران:102) {يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالاً كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا} (النساء:1) {يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلاً سَدِيدًا * يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا} (الأحزاب: 70، 71)

أنَّ رجُلاً قال: يا رَسولَ اللهِ، إنَّ شَرائِعَ الإسلامِ قد كَثُرَت عليَّ، فأخبِرْني بشيءٍ أتشَبَّثُ به، فقال: لا يزالُ لِسانُك رَطبًا مِن ذِكرِ اللهِ تعالى

at-Tirmidhi (3375) and Ibn Maajah (3793) from ‘Abdullah ibn Busr, according to which a man said: O Messenger of Allah, The teachings of Islam are overwhelming for me. Tell me of something that I will be able to adhere to. He said: “Always keep your tongue moist with the remembrance of Allah.
I will share my reflections on a more pragmatic approach to the dhikr.
My approach is to live our lives observing three Cs, consciously, conscientiously and constructively drawing from the life of Ibrahim AS.
I think his story sets the stage for the process of self transformation for all of us.
Consciousness:

The Holy Quran does not approve life without consciousness. It criticises people whose words and actions are disconnected with consciousness. An unexamined life is not worth living,

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لاَّ يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لاَّ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لاَّ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ ۚ أُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ كَٱلْأَنْعَـٰمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْغَـٰفِلُونَ

And most certainly have We destined for hell many of the invisible beings and men who have hearts with which they fail to grasp the truth, and eyes with which they fail to see, and ears with which they fail to hear. They are like cattle - nay, they are even less conscious of the right way:it is they, they who are the [truly] heedless!
- Mohammad Asad

they are farther astray" - inasmuch as animals follow only their instincts and natural needs and are not conscious of the possibility or necessity of a moral choice.

We read و ما يشعرون and

أَمۡوَٰتٌ غَيۡرُ أَحۡيَآءٖۖ وَمَا يَشۡعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبۡعَثُونَ

Living consciously is living with a state of awareness of our verbal and non verbal communication, our random thoughts and instinctive behaviour … it is about taking control of our life, about thinking of decisions rather than making them without thought, about having a life that we want rather than settling for the one that befalls us. In short it is about self awareness and self development or what Iqbal called تعمیر خودی

سمجھے گا زمانہ تری آنکھوں کے اشارے
دیکھیں گے تجھے دُور سے گردُوں کے ستارے
ناپید ترے بحرِ تخیّل کے کنارے
پہنچیں گے فلک تک تری آہوں کے شرارے
!تعمیرِ خودی کر، اَثرِ آہِ رسا دیکھ

This process should begin early on when the mind is still fresh and impressionable. Once we reach a certain age, our ways of thinking becomes more rigid, where fresh ideas fail to

germinate, and where the process of delearning in order to re-learning often fails, Ibrahim AS was a young man فتي
So what happens when the mind becomes conscious? It listens only to the voice of conscience, that grows louder and louder.
Conscience
Allah SWT has given us a moral guide within ourselves and called it النفس اللوامة
و لا اقسم بالنفس اللوامة

But nay! I call to witness the accusing voice of man's own conscience!

- Mohammad Asa

The reproachful soul
Lawwama, as here, which feels consciousness of evil, and resists it, asks for Allah's grace and pardon after repentance and tries to amend; it hopes to reach salvation;

Ibrahim As was a young man given the gift of self introspection who was not satisfied with the customs and norms of his society. He

decided to listen the voice of his conscience by declaring:

إني سقيم

He questioned the idolatry practiced by his people and decided he was not only not going to follow it, he would also try to change his people.
As Iqbal said

صورت نہ پرستم من بتخانہ شکستم من

He used the tools of deductive and demonstrative logic with his father and his community first by breaking the idols and telling his people why don't you ask your biggest idol who broke the rest.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ آزَرَ أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا آلِهَةً إِنِّي أَرَاكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لاَ أُحِبُّ الآفِلِينَ فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا

تُشْرِكُونَ إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ [الأنعام:74- 79].

A symbolic change of direction.

Even though he belonged to a nation of isolators He AS broke the idols.

We are passing through a time period dominated by idol worshipping. This idol is materialism.

میرے ہاتھوں سے تراشے ہوئے پتھر کے صنم
آج بت خانے میں بھگوان بنے بیٹھے ہیں

This world needs an Ibrahim

یہ دور اپنے براہیم کی تلاش میں ہے
صنم کدہ ہے جہاں لا الٰہ الا اللہ

So what shall we as individuals do?

اگرچہ بت ہیں جماعت کی آستینوں میں
مجھے ہے حکم اذاں لا الٰہ الا اللہ

(ما كان إبراهيم يهوديا ولا نصرانيا ولكن كان حنيفا مسلما وما كان من المشركين (67))

The third aspect is living constructively.

This is both abstractly a critical reconstruction and restructuring of our personalities and

life, , our outlook on society, world, religion, politics, education, and in a concrete sense building a lasting legacy.
Ibrahim AS constructed a life of total submission to Allah that we have been ordered

قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ) : آل عمران/95. (الْمُشْرِكِينَ
وقال عز وجل : (وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلاً) النساء/125.
This also relates to building our Akhira and earning a place in Jannah with our own effort.

خورشید جہاں تاب کی ضو تیرے شرر میں
آباد ہے اک تازہ جہاں تیرے ہُنر میں
جچتے نہیں بخشے ہوئے فردوس نظر میں
جنّت تری پنہاں ہے ترے خُونِ جگر میں
اے پیکرِ گِل کوششِ پیہم کی جزا دیکھ
عمل سے زندگی بنتی ہے جنت بھی جہنم بھی
یہ خاکی اپنی فطرت میں نہ نوری ہے نہ ناری ہے

This is Iqbal’s exposition of the Quranic statement

ليس للإنسان إلا ما سعي

Second part
The final point in this process of self construction is based upon this verse.

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ [سورة البقرة:127].
Here an interesting point is the inclusion of Ismael AS. The message is that whatever we do for Allah's sake, we must involve our children in it, be it social work, political activism, religious studies, business enterprise or academic pursuits. However, we must not impose our choice of their career on them; we should guide them to define themselves and to discover their own avenues suited to their personality and talent.

دیار عشق میں اپنا مقام پیدا کرا
نیا زمانہ نئے صبح و شام پیدا کر

یہ فیضانِ نظر تھا یا کہ مکتب کی کرامت تھی
سِکھائے کس نے اسمٰعیلؑ کو آدابِ فرزندی

Training our younger generation to live consciously, conscientiously and constructively we need to encourage them to think and rethink strategically as they tackle the issues of this global area, and keep making dua for them as Ibrahim AS did

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ (124)

(إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ [سورة النحل: 120]

Second part

تكبيرات

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ [سورة البقرة:128]

O Allah! We are Your servants, and the children of Your servants and You honored us by including us in the Ummah of your Beloved Prophet صلي الله عليه وسلم

We raise our hands to You in the hope that You will not send us back from this place empty handed.
O Allah ease the difficulties of our brothers and sisters in Gaza and everywhere
Accept our dua for ourselves and for everyone in need
Give pious spouses to those who are unmarried
Give pious and righteous children to those who don't have children
Make our children true Muslims
Give abundant Rizq halal, peace and prosperity to all of us.
Awaken the conscience of the people of the world to stand up against the unjust killing of innocent lives in Gaza
Accept our dua and guide us to live and die on Your religion